



**August 20, 2010**

\*\*This edition of the COD Processing Update will remain on the [COD Web site](#) until a new edition is posted. We will notify schools via a COD Web Message when a new edition has been posted.\*\*

## *Direct Loan Program*

### COD News

#### **Title IV Refunds Sent August 8-9, 2010 and August 14-16, 2010 Delayed in G5 (8/19/10)**

Federal Student Aid has determined that some refunds have not processed in G5 and, in turn, are not reflecting in the COD System. Due to a technical issue, G5 was delayed in processing refunds returned to the Department of Education during the time period of August 8-9, 2010 and August 14-16, 2010.

The technical issue has been resolved and the processing of refunds from August 8-9, 2010 is expected to be completed today. These transactions will reflect in the COD System usually within 24-48 hours after G5 processing is complete. Federal Student Aid is working with G5 on the processing of refunds from August 14-16, 2010.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for the inconvenience this issue may have caused.

#### **System-Generated Response Processing and Scheduling (8/19/10)**

Earlier this week, some schools reported a delay in receiving system-generated responses, particularly responses sent when a borrower completes a Master Promissory Note (PN response type) or Entrance Counseling (EC response type).

Currently, the COD System processes and sends all system-generated responses once a day (except Sunday) at 5:00 A.M. (ET) for activity that occurred the preceding day. As a result, the system-generated response processing that began on Monday, August 16, 2010 included a significant amount of weekend activity, causing a cascading delay through Wednesday, August 18, 2010.

System-generated response activity for the period August 14, 2010 through August 17, 2010 was up-to-date by 6:30 P.M. (ET) on Wednesday, August 18, 2010. The following system-generated responses were impacted by this delay:

- Booking Notification (BN)
- Credit Decision Override (CO)
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- Negative Disbursement (ND)
- Payment to Servicer (PS)
- PLUS Request Acknowledgement (SP)
- Promissory Note (PN)



- TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (AT)
- TEACH Grant Counseling (AC)

In order to reduce the processing time for weekend activity in the future, Federal Student Aid will begin to run the system-generated response file on Sunday. **Note:** Origination and disbursement batch responses and other types of processing were not impacted because processing occurs frequently throughout the day.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for the inconvenience that any delay may have caused and appreciates your patience as it adjusts processing schedules accordingly.

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An explanation of how these activities will impact COD System availability and processing follows below. Please review this information to determine if processing at your school will be affected.

### **Routine COD System Maintenance**

On **Sunday, August 22, 2010**, we will perform system maintenance on the COD System. The impact to COD users is outlined below.

- Users will not be able to submit or retrieve data via the [COD Web site](#) between 1:30 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET).
- An individual will not be able to complete online Direct Loan Entrance Counseling, complete a new Master Promissory Note (MPN) electronically, complete a Direct PLUS Loan Request electronically, or endorse a Direct PLUS Loan electronically via the [StudentLoans.gov Web site](#) between 1:30 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET).
- An individual will not be able to complete TEACH Grant Initial and Subsequent Counseling, complete a new TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (ATS), or retrieve an existing ATS via the [TEACH Grant Web site](#) between 1:30 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET).



- Between 1:30 A.M. and 11:00 A.M. (ET), batches submitted by schools via the SAIG will be held or schools will receive an error message informing them that the SAIG is unavailable and that the data must be transmitted at a later time.

### **Contact Information**

Federal Student Aid appreciates your patience and understanding as it completes this important activity. If you have any questions about the COD System, the StudentLoans.gov Web site, or the TEACH Grant Web site, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you have any questions about the SAIG, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at 800/330-5947 or by e-mail at [CPSSAIG@ed.gov](mailto:CPSSAIG@ed.gov).

### **Peak Processing Reminders (08/13/10)**

As our annual peak processing period begins, Federal Student Aid asks for your assistance in managing our call volumes by waiting at least 24 hours after sending a batch to the COD System before contacting the COD School Relations Center to report a missing acknowledgement/response. If you do not receive the acknowledgement/response within 24 hours, contact the COD School Relations Center to research the situation and ensure that the acknowledgement/response is sent to your school's SAIG mailbox.

Additionally, Federal Student Aid would like to remind schools the Applicant Services Department (800/557-7394) is available to assist your Direct PLUS Loan borrowers and endorsers in a variety of ways. These include:

- Providing information about credit status and denied credit decision appeals
- Providing information about obligations/responsibilities to endorsers of Direct PLUS Loans

The COD School Relations Center is currently experiencing unusually high call volume on the Applicant Services Department's telephone lines. Often the questions are requests for loan or disbursement status information and/or requests to change the student's address. Only the school can address actual loan or disbursement status questions and the school should initiate any permanent address changes on the COD System.

Federal Student Aid encourages schools to advise only its Direct PLUS Loan borrowers, endorsers, or borrowers experiencing issues completing actions on the StudentLoans.gov Web site to contact the Applicant Services Department at 800/557-7394 for assistance. Loan or disbursement status and other general questions from borrowers are best handled by the school.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this period.

### **Master Promissory Note, Entrance Counseling, and PLUS Search Issues [(4/22/10) Updated 7/30/10]**

Federal Student Aid had identified several issues when schools searched for Direct Loan Master Promissory Notes (MPNs), Direct Loan Entrance Counseling results, or Direct PLUS Loan Requests via the [COD Web site](http://www.cod.ed.gov). On July 25, 2010 and July 27, 2010, Federal Student Aid implemented system updates to resolve most of these search issues.



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**Issue 1: MPN Search by SSN-The search results do not return all MPNs associated with the student.**

The search results should include any MPNs from any school associated with a student. Federal Student Aid has determined that in some cases, a search by student SSN is not pulling all MPNs associated with that student. For example, the search results will not always include a Direct PLUS Loan MPN associated with that student. In other cases, no search results are returned at all, even if an MPN is on file.

**RESOLVED-Issue 2: MPN Search by Date Range-The search results of more than 100 records do not display correctly and school cannot move to “Page 2” of the results.**

The search results should now correctly display results of more than 100 records and a school can move to subsequent pages.

**RESOLVED-Issue 3: Direct Loan Entrance Counseling date range search is unavailable.**

The date range search functionality for Direct Loan Entrance Counseling is now available. In order to return the best results when performing a date range search, the maximum search period is 7 days.

**RESOLVED-Issue 4: Direct PLUS Loan Request (PLUS Acknowledgement) date range search is unavailable.**

The date range search functionality for Direct PLUS Loan Requests is now available. In order to return the best results when performing a date range search, the maximum search period is 7 days.

**RESOLVED-Issue 5: Person Search by SSN-No search results returned, but batch search by SSN does return results**

The search results should now return information related to the person (student/borrower).

Federal Student Aid is continuing its work to resolve the remaining search issue as soon as possible and will provide updates as more information becomes available. These updates will be posted in the COD Processing Update.

While most search functionality is restored, as an alternative, schools can continue to use the Batch Search page to locate the desired information. When using this workaround, a school should perform a general date range search (up to 60 days) for ALL batches. After the results are displayed, the school can filter the results for the specific batch type: “EC” for Entrance Counseling batches, “PN” for MPN batches, and “SP” for PLUS Request Acknowledgement batches.

Federal Student Aid apologizes for any inconvenience these issues cause schools and appreciates your patience. If you have questions, contact the COD School Relations Center.



### **Reminder of Origination Fee Reduction for Direct Subsidized Loans and Direct Unsubsidized Loans (05/14/10)**

As explained in a [February 4, 2010 Electronic Announcement](#) posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site, the origination fee for Direct Subsidized Loans and Direct Unsubsidized Loans was reduced for 2010-2011. This announcement provides operational guidance for schools and third party software providers on implementing these latest reductions in the origination fee.

Last year, many Direct Subsidized Loan and Direct Unsubsidized Loan awards rejected because the correct origination fee was not included with the award and/or was not used to calculate the award and its disbursements. For this reason, we want to remind schools of the previously provided guidance that is critical to successfully implementing the origination fee reduction for Direct Subsidized Loan and Direct Unsubsidized Loan awards.

Schools should refer to [the February 4, 2010 Electronic Announcement](#) for complete information about the origination fee reduction.

If your school needs assistance with COD System processing, including making changes to origination fees, contact the COD School Relations Center.

### **Weekly Reminders**



#### **COD Computer-Based Training (08/20/10)**

Federal Student Aid takes this opportunity to remind the community of the availability of the COD Computer-Based Training (CBT). The COD CBT includes enhancements that have been made to the COD System, the [COD Web site](#), and associated Web sites and software products through June 27, 2009.

The COD CBT consists of component simulations and CBTs. Each COD CBT component is explained below. The electronic files associated with each component, as well as information about downloading and navigating the COD CBT, are available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site. Under the “Tools for Schools” section on the home page, click on [COD Computer-Based Training](#).

**Note:** With the implementation of the [StudentLoans.gov Web site](#) at the end of March 2010, the three electronic Master Promissory Note (MPN) simulations no longer reflected the process for electronically completing Direct Loan MPNs and have been removed. We will post updated electronic MPN simulations when we next update the full version of the COD CBT.

The components of the COD CBT are as follows:

**COD System Simulations** – The COD System Simulations offer lessons that explain the [COD Web site](#) screens and functionality available to a school administrator. There are 14 lessons with text to guide a user through each area of the [COD Web site](#). By entering fictitious data, the user can explore basic navigation and functions of the [COD Web site](#) and practice locating and creating information in a safe environment that includes tips for assistance.



***Direct Loan Reports CBT*** – The Direct Loan Reports CBT includes several sections that explain the COD reports a school can use to assist with the administration of and reconciliation process for William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) awards.

***Grant Reports CBTs*** – The Grant Reports CBTs are four separate lessons that explain the COD reports a school can use to assist with the administration of and reconciliation process for Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG), Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant), National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant (National SMART Grant), and Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant awards.

***Direct Loan (DL) Tools Simulation*** – The DL Tools Simulation demonstrates how to use the DL Tools software to assist with the reconciliation process for Direct Loan awards. Although the simulation can be used both by schools that use the EDEExpress for Windows software and schools that do not use this software, the simulation is especially useful for schools that do not use the EDEExpress software on a regular basis but are interested in a Direct Loan reconciliation resource.

***TEACH Grant Web Site Simulation*** – The TEACH Grant Web site Simulation guides the user through the [TEACH Grant Web site](#) and includes a step-by-step walk through of the process for completing TEACH Grant counseling and completing a TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve (ATS).

If you have questions or comments about the COD CBT, contact the COD School Relations Center. If you e-mail your question or comment to [CODSupport@acs-inc.com](mailto:CODSupport@acs-inc.com), please include “COD CBT Question/Comment” in the subject line.





## Grant Programs

*ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, and TEACH Grant*

### COD News

**NEW!**

#### **Second 2009-2010 Pell Grant Deobligation Due To Verification Status “W” (08/20/10)**

On August 19, 2010, Federal Student Aid deobligated 2009-2010 Award Year Federal Pell Grant (Pell Grant) disbursements that did not have a verification status updated from “W” to a valid status of “V” or “S”. As noted in the warning message that Federal Student Aid sent to affected schools on August 5, 2010, these disbursements were considered overawards and reduced to a zero dollar amount (\$0.00), even though the disbursements were previously accepted in the COD System. This deobligation affected Pell Grant disbursements at approximately 242 schools. A school affected by the deobligation will receive or see the following information:

- Receive a PGTX (PGTX10OP message class) file in the school’s Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailbox indicating the number of students and total amount of the decrease
- Receive a system-generated negative disbursement file (CRND10OP message class/ND document type)
- Receive a new Electronic Statement of Account (ESOA) that reflects the decrease unless there are other offsetting increase adjustments
- See a change in the school’s Current Funding Level (CFL) that reflects the reduced disbursements

**Note:** If a school did not have students with a verification status of “W” just prior to August 19, 2010, it was not affected by the deobligation process.

A school affected by the deobligation should carefully review the following information:

#### ***Verification Completed or Not Required***

If verification has been completed as required or is not required and a school believes a student’s 2009-2010 disbursement should not have been reduced to zero, the school must complete the following steps in this order:

- 1) The school must send an update to the verification status of the award, and the COD System must accept the update.
- 2) Once the verification status is updated to “V” or “S”, the school may submit the actual disbursement (Disbursement Release Indicator or DRI equals “True”) for the correct amount to the COD System for processing.



### *Notes:*

- For the conditions under which each verification status code should be used, refer to [the September 28, 2007 Electronic Announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).
- In the following two cases, it is acceptable for the verification status code field to be blank:
  - If the student was not selected for verification or if a selected transaction was received by the school after the student was no longer enrolled and the school has reported the verification status code as “W”, the school should change the “W” to blank (nil = “True”).
  - If the student was not selected for verification or if a selected transaction was received by the school after the student was no longer enrolled and the school has reported no verification status code to date, the school does not need to submit a verification status code and should leave the field blank (nil = “True”).
- The school can perform steps 1 and 2 above in the same submission to the COD System if reported in the same student record.

### *Verification Deadline*

Some of the 2009-2010 disbursements that were reduced to zero (\$0.00) may have been for students who are still within the allowable timeframe for submitting verification documentation/completing the verification process as specified in the “Notice of Deadline dates for the receipt of documents and other information from institutions and applicants for the Federal student aid programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education” originally published in the [Federal Register](#) on May 26, 2010 and subsequently corrected on June 8, 2010. The correction notice is posted on the [Information for Financial Aid Professionals \(IFAP\) Web site](#).

If a school needs additional time to complete verification for an individual student in accordance with the allowable timeframe in the [Federal Register](#) notice, the school may resubmit a disbursement record with a value greater than zero (\$0.00) until September 30, 2010. After September 30, 2010, the COD System will no longer accept “W” as a valid verification status code for 2009-2010 Pell Grant awards.

If you have any questions regarding the 2009-2010 Pell Grant deobligation of disbursements due to verification status “W,” contact the COD School Relations Center.

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